

What is claimed is:

1. A purified polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

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- a) an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5,
- b) a naturally-occurring amino acid sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5,
- 10 c) a biologically-active fragment of an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5, and
- d) an immunogenic fragment of an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5.

15 2. An isolated polypeptide of claim 1, having a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5.

3. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 1.

20 4. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 2.

5. An isolated polynucleotide of claim 4, having a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, and SEQ ID NO:6.

25 6. A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide of claim 3.

7. A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 6.

30 8. A method for producing a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

- a) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide,

wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 1, and

- b) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

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9. A method of claim 8, wherein the polypeptide has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5.

10. An isolated antibody which specifically binds to a polypeptide of claim 1.

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11. An isolated polynucleotide comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- a) a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, and SEQ ID NO:6,  
b) a naturally-occurring polynucleotide sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, and SEQ ID NO:6,  
c) a polynucleotide sequence complementary to a),  
d) a polynucleotide sequence complementary to b) and  
e) a ribonucleotide equivalent of a)-d).

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12. An isolated polynucleotide comprising at least 60 contiguous nucleic acids of claim 11.

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13. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 11, the method comprising:

- a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is

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formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and

- b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

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14. A method of claim 13, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

15. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 11, the method comprising:

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- a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

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16. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a polypeptide of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

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17. A pharmaceutical composition of claim 16, wherein the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, and SEQ ID NO:5.

18. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an agonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

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- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and
- b) detecting agonist activity in the sample.

19. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an antagonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

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- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and

- b) detecting antagonist activity in the sample.

20. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness in altering expression of a target polynucleotide, wherein said target polynucleotide comprises a sequence of claim 4, the

5 method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising the target polynucleotide to a compound, and
- b) detecting altered expression of the target polynucleotide.

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